

# Students become teachers

*in a Mono Lake Committee–Peer Partners in Environmental Education joint program*

*by Herley Jim Bowling*

Students become teachers in a collaboration between the Mono Lake Committee, the Los Angeles Water Conservation Council (LAWCC), and the Peer Partners in Environmental Education program of the Center for Environmental Education. High school and middle school students attend a presentation and training seminar on the Mono Basin ecosystem, their watershed, sources of their water, water conservation, and actions they can take to make a difference through water conservation. They then develop and give their own presentations in teams of three to nearby elementary school classes, where they are very popular teachers with the younger students.

The student-teachers come away having consolidated their learning by teaching others, and are inspired to do more. Some do water audits of their school with the help of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power or their local water agency. Others work with local members of the LAWCC to organize one-day ultra low flush toilet (ULFT) distributions at their school. These events raise funds for the school or the school's ecology club at \$5–\$15 per toilet distributed. The ULFT-distribution community group creates jobs, people in the community get free toilets, more water is conserved, and water conservation and education is fostered in communities.

The excerpt on the right is from one of the student-teachers, Mary Pearce, on teaching about Mono Lake.

In many cases, students who work with LAWCC bring members of their communities to Mono Lake in the summers as part of the Outdoor Experiences program. The Outdoor Experiences program combines environmental education with muscle-powered outdoor activities helping young people come to understand the source of their water while discovering a world beyond Los Angeles.

For more information about education programs in Los Angeles, or how you can host a program in your school, contact Herley Jim Bowling ([herleyjim@monolake.org](mailto:herleyjim@monolake.org)) at (310) 826-6152. For information on the Outdoor Experiences program contact Bartshe Miller ([bartshe@monolake.org](mailto:bartshe@monolake.org)) at (760) 647-6595. 🐾

*Education consultant Herley Jim Bowling works with schools and community-based organizations in Los Angeles. His dynamic presentations, which involve hands-on activities such as making tufa, bring Mono Lake to life 350 miles away. Included in his bag of tricks is a Zulu song which he sometimes sings to his classes!*

## Thoughts on yesterday's teaching

*Yesterday I experienced something that I've never really experienced before. Self-satisfaction. I felt like I really made a difference. The kids listened, they understood, and they participated. And there is no greater feeling than to have people look up to you and believe in you.*

*I really do believe that we made a small difference in their lives. Many kids said that they will change their ways, take shorter showers, and even tell their parents ways to conserve water. And if those 20 minutes made a big difference in those small children's lives then those 20 minutes were worth it. I had a great time and I wish I could do it again.*

*Mary Pearce  
Science, Period 1  
December 9, 1999*

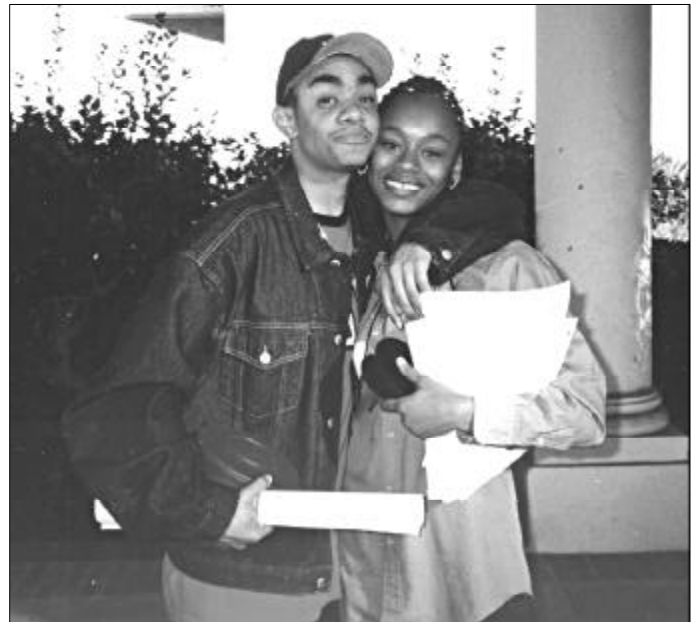


Photo by Herley Jim Bowling

*Student-teachers Mary Pearce and Anthony Auzenne after their presentation at the Angeles Mesa Elementary School.*